

Officers of Parade and Prominent Men Officiating at Unveiling of Columbus Memorial



Beautiful Memorial Due To Industry of Knights

Authorized by Special Act of Congress, With President Taft Chairman of Commission Which Selected Design and Site on Union Station Plaza.

The Columbus Memorial, occupying probably the most conspicuous position of any statue or memorial in Washington, at the very gateway of the Nation's Capital, represents an actual expenditure of money far more than \$100,000. Had it been erected as many of the memorials now adorning the streets and parks of the city were, and without the systematic backing of an organization, the members of which did not hesitate to throw their entire time and give their expert views as to the preliminary arrangements for it, it probably would have cost twice that amount.

The memorial was authorized by a special act of Congress, carrying with it an appropriation of \$100,000. To make it strictly a national affair the Government placed the structure on its own property. The memorial is the only one erected by the nation to Columbus.

The bill providing for the Columbus Memorial was introduced by Congressman Joseph A. Goulden of New York, January 25, 1906, and in the legislative procedure incident to it, it was referred to the Committee on Library of the House, where, after consideration by the committee, it was reported back to the House with a recommendation favoring its passage.

House Bill is Reported.

On May 19, 1906, almost four months after the bill was referred to the committee, Congressman McCleary, chairman of the Committee on Library, reported the bill to the House in what is known as H. R. No. 431, first session, Fifty-ninth Congress.

The bill went through the usual procedure of all legislation in the national legislature, and finally was passed by the Senate on the day preceding the adjournment of Congress, and was signed by President Roosevelt on the morning of March 4, 1907. Here it might not be amiss to say that the pen used by the President in signing the bill is kept at the Knights of Columbus Hall, in E street northwest.

The provisions for carrying out the bill's purpose directed that the Chairman of the Committee on Library of the House, Mr. McCleary and Senator Wetmore, chairman of the same committee on the part of the Senate, with

Secretary of State Root, and Secretary of War Taft, and the Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus be a commission empowered to carry out the law's object.

These gentlemen very soon afterward met and organized, by making President Taft, then Secretary of War, chairman of the commission, and appointing the Superintendent of Public Buildings and Grounds, Colonel Brownell, the executive officer of the commission, who three years ago was succeeded by the present executive officer, Col. Spencer Cosby, U. S. A.

Plaza Is Selected.

The commission, after a thorough discussion covering the proposed sites for the memorial, selected the plaza in front of the Union Station as the most commanding one in the city for the purpose, and when this was done invitations were issued to the great sculptors of the United States to submit designs that would harmonize with the surroundings and be appropriate for the purpose to be obtained.

D. H. Burnham & Co., of Chicago, were selected as the consulting architects, and they drafted the general features treating the subject, while Lorado Taft, of Chicago, the designer in his model for the figure of Columbus, which was to be the central figure in the fountain effect proposed by the architect.

The memorial takes the form of an immense shaft, at the back of the fountain, surmounted by a huge globe indicative of the world, upon which is delineated the western hemisphere in relief, the corners of the globe being guarded by great eagles in stone. The figure of Columbus is seen standing on the prow of his vessel, which projects into the fountain, while on either side of the shaft are replicas of two men, one indicative of the old world, being an aged patriarch, while the other is a native of the new world—an Indian. The back of the shaft is to carry a medallion of Ferdinand and Isabella.

Public Sentiment Active.

Since the grand Columbus celebration in 1892, marking the four hundredth anniversary of his discovery of this country, there has been a growing sentiment for a further memorial to the great admiral. The sentiment devel-

oped in strength and power, even amid the weeds of indifference and discreditable opposition. It could no longer be denied. Fostered and advocated by the Knights of Columbus it reached the national House and Senate in the form of a bill which, after careful and conscientious consideration, was enacted into law. The passage of the measure reflected the highest credit on Congress and the country.

Under the provisions of the law the memory of Columbus will receive that national recognition to which it is justly entitled. The memorial now nearing completion assures the perpetuation of his name on American soil. And it proves the gratitude of the American people.

The bill providing for the Columbus Memorial was framed by Joseph Paul Burg, former advocate of Potomac Council, Washington, and was introduced in January, 1906, by Congressman Goulden, of the Eighteenth New York district. Mr. Goulden was deeply interested in the measure from the start and supplemented its introduction with an earnest and energetic campaign in its behalf. He discussed it at every opportunity and presented its merits so strongly, and so successfully, that he succeeded in eliciting the hearty support and active co-operation of several other members of the House.

Bill Favorably Reported.

The bill was favorably reported by Hon. James T. McCleary of Minnesota, chairman of the Committee on Library of the House, with whose great assistance it was finally passed. The progress of the bill was also materially aided by Senator Hanabrough of North Dakota, acting chairman of the Senate Committee on Library. Special thanks are due these distinguished gentlemen for their splendid assistance in securing favorable consideration for the measure.

The full text of the bill is as follows: (Public No. 25.) An Act to provide a suitable memorial to the memory of Christopher Columbus.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there shall be erected in the city of Washington, in the District

of Columbia, a suitable memorial to the memory of Christopher Columbus.

Sec. 2. That for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act a commission, consisting of the chairman of the Senate Committee on the Library, of the Fifty-ninth Congress, the chairman of the Committee on the Library of the House of Representatives of the Fifty-ninth Congress, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, and the Supreme Knight of the Order of the Knights of Columbus, shall be created, with full authority to select a site and a suitable design, and to contract for and superintend the construction of said memorial.

Sec. 3. That for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act the sum of \$100,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated out of any money in the Treasury of the United States not otherwise appropriated.

Approved, March 4, 1907, 11 a. m.

The Columbus memorial commission held its first meeting on Saturday, May 18, 1907, in the office of the Secretary of State at Washington, with the following members of the commission in attendance: Elihu Root, Secretary of State; William H. Taft, Secretary of War; United States Senator George Peabody Wetmore of Rhode Island, chairman of the Senate Committee on Library of the Fifty-ninth Congress; Hon. James T. McCleary, of Minnesota, chairman of the House Committee on Library of the Fifty-ninth Congress; and Edward L. Hearn, supreme knight of the Knights of Columbus. The commission organized, with Secretary of War William H. Taft as chairman, and his private secretary, Mr. Campbell, as secretary.

The work of the commission at this first meeting was largely constructive and consisted principally of a general discussion of plans for the future and how best to proceed to obtain a design or model for the proposed memorial.

Site Is Selected.

Sites for the location of the memorial were discussed in a general way, and the manner of inviting sculptors of Italy, Spain, and America to submit designs and models was referred to the chairman, who, by vote of the commission, was instructed to correspond with leading sculptors in the countries mentioned regarding such designs and models.

The later acceptance by the commission of the design submitted by Lorado Taft, of Chicago, and the selection of a site for the memorial are facts already well known.

Last August President Taft appointed Post Supreme Knight Edward L. Hearn and Colonel Cosby, of the War Department, as a commission with full power to arrange details and name a date for the unveiling of the memorial. In recognition and appreciation of the honor conferred upon Post Supreme Knight Hearn, the last national convention voted to empower him to appoint such committee or committees as he deemed advisable in connection with the unveiling ceremony, and authorized the board of directors to expend a sum not to exceed \$10,000 for the proper celebration of the event.

Memorial Striking in The Simplicity of Its Design

Massive Blocks of Marble Weighing Many Tons Trimmed Down Into Artistic Figures, Each Representing Some Incident Connected With Discovery of America.

In design the Columbus memorial is said by artists and mechanics to be the most attractive of any of the larger statues in this country. It was so studied out to be striking in its very simplicity; symbolic of Christopher Columbus, whose plainness and simplicity made him one of the most attractive of men.

The features of the memorial are the distinct outstanding figures, each representing an incident in connection with the discovery of America by the great mariner. The most conspicuous, of course, is the likeness of Columbus, standing erect and facing the south. His position is supposed to represent him standing in the prow of the good ship Santa Maria.

The prow of the vessel is in the shape of a woman's head and bust. On the top of the memorial group is a gigantic ball representing the world, with four American eagles gazing southwestward, northwestward, northeastward, and southeastward, at its base. Four festoons separate the eagles.

On the extreme east and west sides of the structure are two great lions sitting on their haunches, with their fore feet resting in front of them.

Also in the sides of the memorial are two lateral figures, one representing the Caucasian and the other the Indian. The Caucasian faces eastward with a look of determination, while the Indian faces westward, symbolic of the race of people found on this continent when the discoverer came.

Striking Facts About Columbus Memorial

Authorized by Congress.
Only memorial to Columbus built by Government, and placed on Government property.
Cost, \$100,000.
Took eight months to build.
Weighs nearly 2,000 tons.

weighed twenty-six tons when shipped in the rough. When trimmed it weighed twenty-three tons. The pieces from which the lions were cut weighed over twelve tons in the rough. The lions trimmed weigh tons each. The prow of the ship "Santa Maria" weighed about thirty tons when shipped. The statue of Columbus weighed almost fifty tons in the rough, but in its finished state weighs but twenty-two tons. The four festoons weighed ten tons when rough, and seven and one-half tons when trimmed.

Great Mass of Marble.

There are 8,500 cubic feet of marble, weighing 175 pounds to the foot. This represents a weight of 1,487,500 pounds. There are 75,000 bricks in the inside of the structure, each weighing five pounds. This aggregates 375,000 pounds. There are 500 cubic yards of concrete, weighing 800 pounds to the cubic yard, or 11,250,000 pounds. There are ten tons of reinforced steel. The total weight of the memorial is 3,132,000 pounds.

The memorial rests on many strong piles, embedded thirty-eight feet in the earth. They are placed so deep as to get below the old street level before the present station was erected. They are six feet below the old level, this being deemed best so that in future years there can be no settling of the tremendous weight. On the inside of the base the brick and concrete is reinforced by steel girders. Although a great amount of concrete and brick make up the foundation of the memorial, nothing but the marble of the structure can be seen.

Work on the memorial began October 15, 1911. Few persons thought that such a gigantic structure would be finished even in a year, but with almost 100 stonecutters, sculptors, masons, and laborers the work was swiftly completed. A. W. Taylor, who superintended the construction, executed the marble work on the Carnegie Institute on Sixteenth street, and built a number of public libraries throughout the country. J. C. Robinson & Son, of New York, are the contractors.

For many years foreigners visiting this country marveled at the absence of a monument to the memory of Christopher Columbus. However, there has been standing in Baltimore for over a century, the first monument erected on this continent in honor of the great discoverer, and although there is quite an interesting history connected with it, it was not generally known to Baltimoreans until 1889, when Boundary avenue, now North avenue, was cut through the property on which it stands.

Bears Marble Tablet.

On the west side of the base is a marble tablet bearing the following inscription: "Sacred to the Memory of Christopher Columbus, October XII, MDCCV (1492)." The usage which places the numerals XIII before the final C, indicating that they are to be subtracted from the one hundred, is a quite ancient one.

The property on which the monument stands now belongs to the Samuel Ready School, and the trustees have taken much care to give it prominence. The grounds around are laid off in imposing terraces which add much to its height and appearance.

The cornerstone of this monument was laid on August 3, 1792, being the anniversary of the departure of Christopher Columbus from Spain for the voyage on which he discovered this country, and that day closing the third century and secular year of the event which led to the great discovery. The monument was dedicated on October 12, the anniversary of the day on which he for the first time saw the land he was in quest of, the same day closing the third century and the secular year of that important epoch in the annals of this country.